

Mission

To advocate for the best interest of children who are alleged to be abused, neglected or abandoned and who are involved in court proceedings. The program recruits, trains, and supervises volunteers to represent the best interest of children to the court.

Business Strategy

The Seminole County Guardian Ad Litem Program began in 1980 as part of a pilot project to test the effectiveness of lay citizens as advocates for abused and neglected children. The Guardian Ad Litem Program was created to implement sections 39.822, 914.17(1), and 61.401 of the Florida Statutes. The Legislature has found that the Guardian Ad Litem Program has been an indispensable intermediary between the child and the court, and the child and DCF for the past 20 years. The Guardian Ad Litem Program represents children primarily in dependency cases and also when there is a companion dissolution case.

The volunteer Guardian Ad Litem is the only independent advocate for the child and has the responsibility for advancing what is in the best interest of the child. Guardian Ad Litem are required to gather information, act as a monitor, assure the child's protection, and make written and oral reports to the Court containing information and recommendations until the court discharges the Program or terminates jurisdiction.

Volunteers are trained, screened and supervised by a full-time professional staff. Thirty hours of pre-service training is provided four times a year to maintain an incoming flow of available volunteer advocates. Volunteers are required to attend 6 hours of ongoing in-service training per year.

Objectives

Maintain or increase the number of volunteers; assure quality legal representation for dependent children.

Strive to reach the goal of providing a Guardian Ad Litem volunteer to represent 100% of Seminole County's dependent children.

Department:		JUDICIAL			Seminole County
Division:		CIRCUIT COURT			
Section:		GUARDIAN AD LITEM			FY 2004/05
	2002/03 Actual Expenditures	2003/04 Adopted Budget	2004/05 Tentative Approved Budget	2004/05 Adopted Budget	Change between Tentative Approved & Adopted Budget
EXPENDITURES:					
Personal Services	34,757	33,601	47,591	46,462	-1,129
Operating Services	16,316	16,767	22,858	22,942	84
Capital Outlay	-	-	-	-	-
Debt Service	-	-	-	-	-
Grants and Aid	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal Operating	51,073	50,368	70,449	69,404	-1,045
Capital Improvements	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	51,073	50,368	70,449	69,404	-1,045
FUNDING SOURCE (S)					
General Fund	51,073	50,368	70,449	69,404	-1,045
TOTAL FUNDING SOURCE (S)	51,073	50,368	70,449	69,404	-1,045
Full Time Positions	1	1	1	1	-
Part-Time Positions	-	-	-	-	-
New Programs and Highlights for Fiscal Year 2004/05					
Requested Changes					
Capital Improvements	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Total Project Cost	-	-	-	-	-
Total Operating Impact	-	-	-	-	-

